Education Ministers' Conference

716. SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA:
SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that an Education Ministers' Conference was convened by the Union Government recently;

(b) if so, the details of subjects discussed therein and the outcome thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that some of the State Education Ministers boycotted the said Conference; and

(d) if so, the details and reasons therefor and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) to (d) A Conference of Education Ministers/Education Secretaries of all States UTs was held at New Delhi on 22nd and 23rd October, 1998. The main focus of the Conference was to initiate a consultative process between the Central and State Governments on items listed out in the National Agenda for Governance concerning education, namely, universalising primary education as a preliminary step to universalising elementary education for girls, educational upliftment of scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, other backward classes and minorities and the qualitative improvement of the educational system as a whole.

The important decisions taken in the Conference are at Statement [Refer to the Statement appended to U.Q. No. 713] Some Ministers staged a walk-out during the inaugural session on the issue of Saraswati Vandana, inclusion of recommendations of a group of experts in the agenda, and extension of invitation to the Chairman of a NGO - "Friends of Tribal Society" - to address the gathering. The recommendations of the Group of experts were withdrawn from the agenda items for discussion. The invitation to the Chairman of the NGO was also withdrawn.

Conference of State Education Ministers

717. SHRI SITARAM KESRI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether he convened a conference of State Education Ministers recently;

(b) if so, the agenda of the conference, the conclusions arrived at and the action taken or proposed to be taken thereon;

(c) whether some of the participants staged a walk out from the conference and if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) whether at such official conferences any person, other than Education Ministers and the accompanying officials, can be invited to attend conference?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) to (d) A Conference of Education Ministers of State Governments and Union Territories was held at Delhi on October 22nd and 23rd, 1998. The main focus of the Conference was to initiate a consultative process between the Central and State Governments on items listed out in the National Agenda for Governance concerning education, namely, universalising primary education as a preliminary step to universalising elementary education, eradication of illiteracy, free education for girls, educational upliftment of scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, other backward classes and minorities, harnessing youth power, youth for sports development, establishment of sports school, indigenous sports and games, information technology and the qualitative improvement of the educational system as a whole. One of the annexures containeous recommendations of a Group of Experts on establishment of a high power Autonomous National Mission for Educational Reforms, Universalisation of Elementary Education, curricular reforms, Teacher Education, Higher Education, Management and Administration of Education and certain constitutional provisions and decisions of High Court.

The important decissions taken in the Conference are at Statement (Refer to statement appended to U.Q. No. 713)

Steps are being taken to implement them.

Some Ministers staged a walk-out during the inaugural session on the issue of Saraswati Vandana, inclusion of recommendations of a group of experts in the agenda, and extension